

# Adoption & Adoption Subsidy

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## Purpose

When courts terminate parental rights, the DHS attempts to find permanent adoptive families for children who have been abused or neglected. To promote permanency, the department's goal is to find an adoptive home as quickly as possible. For information on adopting a child, including pictures of children awaiting adoption, call Iowa KidsNet at 1-800-243-0756 or [www.iowakidsnet.com](http://www.iowakidsnet.com).

## Who

As of July 1, 2011, the adoptive parents of 8,586 children were receiving subsidies. Subsidies are paid until the child reaches age 18 or until age 21 if there is a disability. Subsidies are available if:

- The child has a special need (including a diagnosed physical, mental or emotional disability), is older, or is a member of a sibling group of three or more children; and
- The state is unable to place the child for adoption without the subsidy.

*Profile of children adopted via DHS in SFY 2011*

Age		Race/Ethnicity*	
0 - 5	64%	Caucasian	68%
6 - 11	29%	African American	22%
12 - 15	5%	Hispanic/Latino	11%
Over 16	2%	Native American	4%
		Other	1%

\* children may be counted in more than one race/ethnic category

## What

- Via KidsNet, the department recruits and trains prospective foster and adoptive families, and provides post-adoption support to eligible families.
- Subsidies are negotiated based on needs of the child, with the upper limit being the rate that would have been paid if the child was in foster care. In SFY11, the minimum daily rate for family foster care was \$15.74. Federal law prohibits a means test when determining subsidies. More than 90 percent of adoptions arranged by DHS involve a subsidy.
- The department provides Medicaid health insurance to adopted children receiving subsidies.

## How are we doing?

- Adoption performance is measured on timeliness. Iowa excels in this area of child welfare. Timeliness is measured from the day of removal to the day of adoption. Most removed children are reunited, but when Iowa courts terminate parental rights, states must quickly find a permanent home. The national standard is to finalize an adoption for 32 percent of these children within two years of removal. Iowa's performance is 59 percent within two years. The national median is 27 percent.
- The annual number of adoptions is trending lower (chart) due to a downward trend in the number of children in foster care. However, overall subsidy numbers will continue to increase until the children adopted in 2007-8 age out and until the number of children entering and exiting becomes more equalized.
- Iowa regularly and publicly tracks progress in this and other child welfare areas. See <https://dhssecure.dhs.state.ia.us/digitaldashboard/>.

SFY	Total Adoptions
2007	1,050
2008	1,055
2009	937
2010	873
2011	850